Flashback

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FLASHBACK

Journal of the Washington County Historical Society
Preserving the Past for the Future

Volume 62 Fall 2012 Number 3

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Courtesy of Betty Davis

On the cover: Some of the students who attended Fayetteville's Henderson School in 1926. A story about Betty Hayes Davis, who attended the school in the 1930s starts on Page 122.

The U.S.S. Charles J. Finger: The Voyages of the Namesake of a Fayetteville Icon

By Charles Joseph Finger Leflar

On December 8, 1943, after two years of struggle, the outcome of World War II was not yet a foregone conclusion. The epic Pacific battles of Midway and Guadalcanal were past but the Allies were fighting to turn the tide of the war from defensive to offensive. On that December day Jim Morrison of rock 'n' roll fame was born, but this article deals with a different birth, that of the Liberty ship U.S.S. Charles J. Finger, whose keel was laid down at the Todd Huston Shipbuilding Corporation in Texas. This is the story of her wartime service, her name, and her wanderings as a tramp steamer. The ship was named for the noted author, traveler and editor Charles Joseph Finger who resided at Gayeta Lodge just west of Fayetteville in Washington County, Arkansas.[1]

German submarine attacks had almost caused starvation in Great Britain during the early years of World War II. After the United States entered the war in the wake of the Pearl Harbor attack the need for Allied shipping became even greater so that the massive production of United States factories could be sent overseas to contribute to the war effort and our growing armies in Europe and Asia could be supplied. To meet this demand for shipping, the 'Liberty Ship' design was adopted to allow the mass production of cargo ships using assembly line technology.

Called "The Ugly Duckling" by President Franklin Roosevelt, the first of 2,710 Liberty Ships was launched on September 27, 1941, and named the U.S.S. Patrick Henry. These ships were mass produced to a standardized design. Each ship contained about 250,000 parts, which were manufactured at factories all

over the country. The parts were then combined into two sections of approximately 220 feet in length and then welded together. The cost was approximately $2 million per ship in 1940's dollars.

The Liberty Ship, technically named the E2, was 56 feet, 10¾ inches wide and 441 feet, 6 inches long. It had a range of 11,000 miles and was powered by a three-cylinder reciprocating steam engine powered by two oil-burning boilers that produced 2,500 horsepower and could drive the ship at a sustained 11-knot speed (about 12.5 miles per hour). The five holds could carry over 9,140 tons of cargo, plus additional cargo could be lashed to the deck. The cargo capacity translates to a load of 2,840 jeeps, 440 tanks or 230 million rounds of rifle ammunition. The ship would displace 14,245 tons.

The standard crew of a Liberty Ship consisted of the captain, the deck crew, the engine crew stewards, a radio operator, a purser and a pharmacist mate. The deck crew included the chief mate, second and third mates, the maintenance mate, bos'n, carpenter, six able seamen and three ordinary seamen. The engine crew (sometimes referred to as the 'black gang' due to their grimed appearance) consisted of the chief engineer and his first, second and third assistants as well as a deck engineer, three oilers, three firemen and two wipers. The steward's crew included the chief, chief cook, second cook, baker, six messmen and galleymen. Most ships also carried the Naval Armed Guard who were U.S. Navy personnel rather than members of the Merchant Marine. The Naval Armed Guard was usually commanded by a lieutenant junior grade and consisted of 12 to 27 sailors with the number generally increasing during the war as additional defensive armament was added to ships. While they ate together, the Navy and Merchant Marine contingents tended to see themselves as separate organizations.

Construction and Launch of U.S.S. Charles J. Finger

The record for quickly building a Liberty Ship was the U.S.S. Robert E. Peary, whose keel was laid on November 8, 1942, and

which was finished on November 12, 1942, in a total of four days, 15 hours and 29 minutes. The U.S.S. Charles J. Fingers' building time was far more ordinary. The keel was laid on December 8, 1943, by the Todd Houston Shipbuilding Corporation. She was launched on January 28, 1944, and delivered on February 8, 1944, for a total of 63 days in construction, of which 51 days were on the Ways (pre-launch construction area) and 12 days were afloat. The widow and children of Charles J. Finger, most of whom were living in Fayetteville, were invited to the launching but the difficulty of wartime travel precluded their attendance.[2]

Liberty ships were named after prominent deceased American citizens. Charles J. Finger was born in England on Christmas Day of 1867 (some sources say 1869) and lived a life of adventure in Patagonia and Tierra del Fuego before moving to the United States. He eventually settled west of Fayetteville and established himself as a gentleman farmer and author. He drew richly from his experiences living with Native Americans in the southern Andes to write stories for young readers including his *Tales from Silver Lands*, which won the Newberry Award in 1925. He was a prolific author and edited several literary and political works including *Reedy's Mirror*. The University of Arkansas granted him an Honorary Doctorate in 1932. He had five children, locally known as the 'five Fingers.' He passed away from a heart attack in January of 1941 during the German 'blitz' bombing of his beloved London, perhaps caused in part by the pictures of destruction in the news.

Wartime Service and Atlantic Crossings

The U.S.S. Charles J. Finger was quickly used to extract revenge on our nation's enemies for the suffering of her namesake. After being quickly outfitted and crewed, her shakedown voyage from Galveston to Key West (arriving February 23, 1944) allowed her to join convoy KN297 to New York City where she arrived on February 28.[3]

On March 6, she sailed with convoy HY282 to Liverpool loaded with "General Cargo" including munitions. This convoy con-

The silhouette of the U.S.S. Charles J. Finger in March 1944.

Daniel John Teneraso Jr.

sisted of 99 merchant ships and 20 military escorts and arrived on March 22 with no record of interference by enemy forces. This first convoy is one of the few in which there is documentation by a participant on the ship. The wartime memories of Daniel John Teneraso Jr. recorded what it was like to serve as a Merchant Marine on the U.S.S. Charles J. Finger during this Atlantic crossing.

See the section titled Wartime Personal Stories for the personal stories and pictures that are available for the voyages of 'the Finger,' as she was fondly called by her crew.

The return to New York in convoy ON321 was completed on April 24, 1944, and was followed by another quick round trip to Liverpool and New York as the Allies continued to build up supplies for the upcoming D-Day invasion of Hitler's "Fortress Europe." The cargo was listed simply as "General Cargo" and the urgency of the shipment was obviously greater than the threat from U-boats since the ship sailed independently (without convoy) across the Irish Sea from Londonderry to Liverpool, arriving in England on June 2, less than a week prior to the invasion of France. The return to New York was in convoy ON240, which left Liverpool on June 10 and arrived in New York City on June 28, 1944.

The third Atlantic crossing, this time with cargo listed as "General, MT (i.e., motor transport) and cranes," was destined to be her last (at least under the U.S. flag) and also to imitate her namesake's tendency to be a wanderer. She visited ten ports before she passed the Statue of Liberty again. The outbound convoy (HX 299) left New York on July 11 and arrived at Oban, on the west coast of Scotland, on the 23rd. For almost two months she called at ports in England, Ireland and Wales including Methil on the east coast of Scotland[4], Belfast in Northern Ireland and Siene Bay before ending up again in Liverpool on September 12. She again sailed for New York in convoy ON 253 September 13 and arrived on the 28th. It was time for the crew to put away the foul weather gear, forget the fish and chips in England and prepare for a warmer climate.

The Caribbean, Panama and Chile

After almost three weeks in New York harbor, the ship sailed on October 18 southward in convoy NG 466. She was detached from the convoy at some point; the records simply say "Detachment Date Notional," to Guantanamo Bay, Cuba. Her next leg, or legs, are not recorded but we know she is listed as sailing independently from Guaira to Curacao from October 27 until November 4. Yet this is still a puzzle since Guaira is not an identifiable port. While the name sounds like it would fit in the Caribbean Sea, current maps do not show a location of that name accessible to an ocean-going ship. It may be that a port has been renamed from Guaira to something else. It also may be that the records are referring to Guyane, formerly either French Guiana or Dutch Guiana, which are on the coast between Venezuela and Brazil with the ports or Cayenne and Georgetown, respectively. If one of these were the destination then the transit time of about a week to Curacao would not be unreasonable.

From Curacao she sailed independently on November 5 to Cristobal, Panama, which is the northern Caribbean entrance to the Panama Canal, arriving there November 13. She is shown as sailing independently from Balboa, Panama, the next day, therefore she must have transited the Panama Canal on November 13 and 14. Her next port of call, Tocopilla, Chile, is in the shadow of the Andes Mountains. She arrived on November 22 after over a week of travel. While the cargo that was loaded in Tocopilla is not listed, it is probable that it was nitrates, the distinctive product of the region during that time and a prime component in the manufacture of explosives.

The ship left Chile on December 1 and arrived back at Balboa on December 8, the first anniversary of its keel being laid. This first year had seen three Atlantic round trips as well as duty in the Caribbean and Pacific Coast of South America. Exciting as this first year had been, even greater adventures were in store for the Charles J. Finger. After again transiting the Panama Canal to Cristobal on December 8 and 9, the ship returned to the United States where she arrived at Pensacola, Florida, on December 15, 1944.

Across the Pacific, Alone

The records indicate that the ship arrived back at Cristobal, the Caribbean entrance to the Panama Canal, on January 11, 1945, though no known records indicate when she left Pensacola or if there were any stops in between. The Canal was again transited to Balboa on the Pacific coast. It is reasonable to assume that a full load of fuel and food for the crew was taken aboard about this time because a full month elapsed between leaving Balboa on January 12 and arriving at Manus Island, Manus Province, Papua New Guinea, on February 12. The U.S.S. Charles J. Finger sailed independently, alone across the Pacific. Navigation would have primarily been by the traditional methods of navigating by the stars. The forces of the Japanese Empire had already been swept from the seas through which they were sailing so the crew may have been forced to find interesting diversions for the time during this month of lonely Pacific sunrises and sunsets. We have some pictures of the Naval Armed Guard and crew members on this trip taken later during 1945 (see following pages). They show confident, youthful and seemingly high spirited members of the Navy gun crew. One picture shows a mascot monkey named Tojo (named after the military leader of Japan). Another picture shows an interesting contrast between the confident, shirtless Navy sailors and the older merchant crew, one of whom is in oiled coveralls while another is distinctive for his silver hair which contrasts sharply with the young Navy men.

The waters beyond Manus Island were more dangerous; they were in range of Japanese submarines and long-range aircraft. The U.S.S. Charles J. Finger was escorted by the U.S. Navy from Manus on April 1. This implies that the ship spent six weeks at anchor at Manus Island, perhaps enduring a more severe test of boredom than the month alone across the Pacific. She arrived at Ulithi, which was a major staging base for the U.S. Navy's operations against Japan, on April 6. It appears that this five-day trip was followed by another six weeks of inactivity at the lagoon at Ulithi. This may not have been completely boring since the ship

was now in an active war zone. On March 11, less than a month prior to the ship's arrival, Japanese air attacks had caused significant damage to ships in the anchorage. If the Charles J. Finger had been loaded with explosives, fuel or other dangerous supplies then the stress on the crew would have been even higher. While at Ulithi the crew would have been able to celebrate the end of the war in Europe with VE Day on May 8.

The ship sailed from Ulithi on May 26, alone, headed to Tacloban in the Philippines. This port is at the northwest tip of Leyte Gulf in the southeastern part of the Philippines. The naval battle of Leyte Gulf, the largest naval battle in history, had been fought in these waters just a few months earlier (October 23 – 26, 1944) and the interior of many of the islands in the area still held bands of Japanese soldiers. We can be reasonably confident that the enemy at least laid eyes on the ship during this portion of her journeys, even if the crew did not in turn report seeing the enemy.

It is probable, though undocumented, that the Charles J. Finger was active in moving goods and perhaps troops around the islands of the Philippines during June and early July of 1945. It is worth noting that convoy records seem increasingly sporadic as the war progressed and the amount of shipping and number of convoys expanded rapidly. This may also have been a function of experienced personnel being increasingly transferred to combat operations. However, the next recorded voyage shows her leaving Leyte Gulf on July 14 and heading east again. She was heading east for almost a month, in fact. While the crew did not get to stop and see Hawaii, they might not have minded since their destination was San Francisco, which they reached on August 10. It does not appear that they had much time to enjoy the City by the Bay since they left on the 12th and headed south again to Balboa, Panama, arriving August 24, 1945. During this transit down the west coast of the United States the ship would have been able to turn on her lights at night for the first time since being launched. The war ended in the Pacific with VJ Day on August 14. If they shot off a few of the flares in their inventory, and

perhaps even their anti-aircraft armament, no one could have blamed them that night. The ship again travelled the Panama Canal and entered the Caribbean via Cristobal on August 25.

With wartime service finished, little time remained to serve the U.S. Merchant Marine. Between August 25 and September 4 the ship sailed through the Caribbean, around Florida and up the East Coast to New York City again. Many of the crew may have been paid off or reassigned there, with only the minimum crew necessary for moving the ship remaining on board for the final voyage under the United States flag. The U.S.S. Charles J. Finger left New York City on October 18 after about 22 months and roughly 45,000 nautical miles of steaming. She arrived at the James River on October 20 and anchored. Most of her working days were yet ahead of her but perhaps her glory days were over.

Wartime Personal Stories and Pictures

The wartime memories of Daniel John Teneraso Jr.[5]

Daniel "Danny" John Traverso Jr. was a member of the U.S. Merchant Marine from May 8, 1943, until December 20, 1945. His website chronicles his life including the voyages he took on various merchant ships during World War II. One of these trips, 'Voyage Three,' was on the U.S.S. Charles J. Finger.

Mr. Traverso joined the U.S.S. Charles J. Finger on February 9, 1944, which implies that he was one of the original crew when the ship was first commissioned, a "plank owner." He recalls leaving Galveston on February 19 and bypassing New Orleans on their way straight to New York. He served as a messman and recalled that he made a number of close friends on this voyage, friends with whom he signed together on various ships he later served. He refers to the ship as 'the Finger' a number of times, and it is possible that such a nickname might have endeared the ship to those serving on her.

As might be expected of a young man travelling the world on a ship during wartime, a great many of his reminiscences concern adventures ashore at various ports of call. The author en-

courages the reader to read these stories at Mr. Traverso's website but they will not be repeated in this article since they deal with activities ashore and not with the ship.

Some of his stories do deal with happenings on board the ship during this first of her Atlantic crossings. The following quotes are from the previously cited website. On his website, Mr. Traverso recalls a near collision in a North Atlantic fog with a munitions ship:

> "The North Atlantic is always rough and cold, especially in the winter months. I have seen so much ice on everything that you wouldn't recognize it as a ship. It is especially dangerous moving around on a pitching deck when every bit of metal is covered with ice - ice several inches thick. We had to use fire axes to break the ice. It must have been really rough to cross in those little corvettes. They would go completely out of sight and come bobbing back up like a cork, coming completely out of the water. I don't know what it would have been like to ride one of them things across, and we even had tugs cross with us. I'm not just talking about ocean going tugs, I'm talking about tugboats. I don't know how they made it. They must have had everything battened down tight all of the way over and it must have been a horrible ride.
>
> I mentioned collisions at sea. Put that many ships together and there are bound to be accidents. The North Atlantic is often foggy, rainy, or icy. In poor visibility and rough seas its easy for ships to get out of position and at the same time be almost blind - back then we didn't have any radar. One trip it was foggy and we were sounding our fog horn at regular intervals and had our fog buoy off the stern, all the ships were doing the same. Something came loose, a bolt or a screw and lodged in the brass whistle on the stack and the whistle kept blowing; it was stuck open. We couldn't stop it - couldn't get a man up there to fix it with all that steam

coming out before we lost all pressure. We were dead in the water until a man could get up there to fix the whistle and the engineers could get the steam back up.

"Somebody standing near me said 'What's that?' I looked and saw a ship, a freighter coming out of the fog and it was bearing right down on us. It was trying to turn. It was close enough that I could see two men on the monkey bridge frantically turning the wheel. It answered the helm just in time but both our aft ends scraped sides. You could have jumped across decks from one ship to the other as she came up along side us. Their Captain, an old man, was on the bridge with a hand held megaphone and he was screaming. He had a heavy accent and because his bridge was wooden, I think he was Norwegian — the Scandinavians had a tradition of always having their bridges made of wood. Well, the old man was cursing his head off 'You son of a bitch, what the hell you trying to do, you bastard!' Our Captain was pleading back at him through his megaphone how sorry he was but what could he do. We were dead in the water. That ship passed us and disappeared back into the fog. Just before she did I saw the red flag on her stern. That was a signal that she was carrying explosives. If she had hit us God knows what kind of an explosion there might have been as we were carrying munitions also."

Life at sea was seldom that exciting, much of it was routine. In his memories he mentions this routine and the wartime necessity of finding adequate crew for the dangerous cross Atlantic merchant ship runs had some unexpected benefits. Here we have some memories of this contrast with pre-war merchant marine life:

"I liked life at sea and I liked the routine. It suited me. Being at sea really gave a man an appetite. I've seen men come in to breakfast and eat several eggs or even a dozen, with slices of ham and half a loaf of

bread and wash it down with a whole pot of coffee . We had a night cook - a baker. His job was to bake bread, rolls, cakes and pies. We had a chief cook and a second cook, too. They fed us well because we were union and the union demanded it. I got pretty stocky before it was over - first time in my life that I had any fat on me. Before the war a seaman's life was miserable. Poor food, poor living conditions and poor treatment - you had nobody to complain to. It was the Depression and if you didn't take what they gave you, tough. The companies would save money on what they fed a crew. The battle to unionize in the thirties was ugly- men died. The war changed everything. Crews were all unionized, either SIU or NMU. Hell, the steamship companies didn't care as they were making money hand over fist. The government was building all these new ships at public expense and turning them over to various shipping companies to run and then paying the companies war bonuses to operate them. The steamship companies didn't mind feeding us well because they were raking in the money.

"The officers had to be more careful how they dealt with the crew. They couldn't screw you over so easily. If the Captain or the Chief Engineer had a beef and called a seaman up, he had a right to have his union representative present as a witness. If they didn't handle everything properly they knew that there would be hell to pay with the union when they docked. One of the first things a crew did each trip was elect its union representative."

Upon arriving in Liverpool on March 21, 1944 his stories turn towards English food, the use of American cigarettes as currency and contact with our English allies:

"The Finger docked in Liverpool on March 21, 1944. I can't remember the names of bars and picture shows now, but I was familiar enough with Liverpool

back then to know my way around it well. We went ashore every day that we were in port. There was an English guard or watchman that checked our papers the first time we left the ship and he must have had a good memory, because when we came back and after that every time we came or went, he'd smile and stick up his index finger - he knew we were off the Finger.

"I didn't like English food much. They didn't have much, especially meat, but I did like their fish and chips. I would buy a bag of fish and chips every chance I got. They would wrap it in paper — newspaper folded into a cone tapering into a point on the bottom. They had a lot of street vendors with little stands or carts that sold roasted chestnuts, but I couldn't eat the things. We had plenty of cartons of American cigarettes on the ship, Lucky Strike, Old Gold and Chesterfield. American cigarettes were as good as money. I could buy a cartoon for fifty cents aboard ship - five cents a pack and sell them ashore for $10 a cartoon. I've taken several cartoons into a pub and dumped them on the bar and I had all the drinks that I wanted and was able to stand rounds for everybody else. One time we were playing black jack for cartons of cigarettes. I kept getting good cards and I won more than thirty cartons. I took them ashore the next day and really cleaned up. I tried English cigarettes like Players and I thought they were nasty. Everybody wanted American tobacco.

"I can't remember now how I came to know this Englishman. He was older than me. He invited me home to eat with him and his wife. They were very nice people. They made tea with a pot right over the fire place. It was good strong tea. They asked how I liked it and I said fine, but it didn't taste anything like our tea back home. They asked what kind we drank and I told them Lipton Tea. The man laughed and asked if that was the tea that came in little paper envelopes.

I said yes. They both laughed and said that yes, their tea was very different from ours. They didn't have a lot but they shared what they had. I was often invited into English homes."

What would good be stories of a sailor during wartime be without at least one bar fight? We hear a story about that, too:

"They said that the crew and the Navy Armed guard shouldn't fraternize but you'd make friends anyway. A ship is not a big place and after weeks a sea there is no way to keep sixty guys from running into each other and we worked together in gunnery practice. I got to be good friends with several Navy sailors on different voyages. I was drinking in this pub with one of them. He was a big guy about twice my size. I don't know what he said to these English sailors but one thing led to another. You'd have guys from all different countries and different branches of the services drinking in a bar and sooner or later something would be said. I saw it coming and all these guys a head taller than me and I'm thinking what the hell is this sailor getting me into. This Navy guy says something like my shipmate here can whip any of you Limey bastards. "Oh yeah?" said the English. Here I'm the smallest one in the pub, but then you can't back down. I figured I might as well get in at least one punch – the first one. So I sucker-punched the biggest of the lot. Those Limey sailors nearly beat the crap out of us – we were lucky to get out of there alive.

The Navy Armed Guards had it made from what I could see. I called them "passengers". They cleaned their guns and had a daily drill but mostly they ate and slept. They didn't have anything to do with running the ship. We were working when they were sun bathing and laying around. Their work would come defending us, of course we would be helping them do their work, too. But it was good to have gunners aboard and like I

said, I made good friends with several of them."

His return voyage back to New York was less eventful than the voyage out, but his description of the heavy navy escort makes one wonder if our code breakers had identified an unusual threat from German U-Boats, a danger which was increasingly rare at this stage of the war:

> "The SS Charles J. Finger departed Liverpool at 1030 April 7, 1944 in a convoy of eighty vessels with a heavy escort of ten destroyers, destroyer escorts and corvettes and two aircraft carriers. No contact with the enemy occurred and the convoy speed was 11 knots. The Finger arrived New York at 1330 April 24, 1944. Two days later the crew got discharged and paid off at the Overlakes Freight Corporation in New York City. Danny caught the train and started south and west for Texas and home."

Mr. Traverso served honorably on a number of other ships in various theatres of the war, but never again on the U.S.S. Charles J. Finger. No other stories from those who served aboard her are known though we do have photographs from a later voyage.

Photographs from the Pacific

Three known photographs exist from the U.S.S. Charles J. Finger during her Pacific Ocean voyage. The first of these pictures (above right) show a mixture of the Navy Armed Guard who manned the guns and the Merchant Marine crew, who ran the ship. Notice that the man on the left is wearing soiled overalls; he may be a part of the 'Black Gang' or engine room crew. The man second from the left is the only gray-haired person in any of the photos, possibly an experienced merchant sailor.

Post World War II

As was the case with many other Liberty Ships, the Charles J. Finger was sold by the U.S. government after the war to private owners. She sailed under six different names and under the flags

Daniel John Teneraso Jr.

Crew on the U.S.S. Charles J. Finger in July 1945. Left to right: Two Merchant Crew, O'Malley, Bonker, Fitzpatrick, Winter, Elliott, and Waterhouse.

Daniel John Teneraso Jr.

Shipmates of the U.S.S. Charles J. Finger in the Philippine Islands during August 1945, seen here with their mascot Tojo.

Daniel John Teneraso Jr.

Part of the crew of the U.S.S. Charles J. Finger in August 1945. Left to right starting in front: Winter, Quina, O'Malley, Rogers, Fitzpatrick, Bonker, Bucannan, Nichols, and Gaines.

of four more nations during the balance of her career.[6]

In 1947 she was transferred to the East Asiatic Line and renamed the St. Thomas, the third ship of this name owned by this company (previous St. Thomases were acquired in 1907 and 1916). Company records[7] describe her as "Ex-Liberty ship – originally Charles J. Finger. Crew 37. Bought by EAC in 1947. Sold to Panamanian owners, renamed (Cavostaras and re-flagged 1951. (sic.)." The records also describe her origins at the Houston Shipbuilding Corporation in Texas and describe her 'service speed' as 10 knots, down from the 11 knots of her wartime years.

In 1951 her ownership passed to the Aragon Cia Nav which appeared to be a Panamanian subsidiary of Orion Shipping Company. She was renamed the Cavostaras and sailed under the Panamanian flag. Orion's Panamanian offices were then in New

Daniel John Teneraso Jr.

The U.S.S. Charles J. Finger during the time, circa 1947-1951, she was named the 'St. Thomas,' according to the Danish Shipping Records company, Foto: Poul Tingleffs arkiv.

York though it currently maintains offices in many major cities around the world including London, Cairo and Karachi. Orion is a privately held company so detailed information about the Charles J. Finger is not readily available.

In 1953 the ship's ownership was again transferred and the ship renamed. The new name was Despina and the owner Cia Europa Comm. Y Maritims, a Panamanian company, and evidently still sailing under the flag of Panama. In 1959 she was renamed the Amfithea while retaining the same owner. However, the renaming might have been connected to her being reflagged as a Greek ship.

The next name change also involved an ownership change as well as a new national flag. In 1964 she was renamed the Maratha Explorer, transferred to Chowgule Steamships. At this time she seems to have adopted her final nationality. Shipping records indicate she sailed under the "Goa – Indian flag." Goa the smallest of the Indian states in size and the fourth smallest in population. It is a former Portuguese colony located on the

War-Time Convoy Records				
	Date		Location	
	SHIP'S CONSTRUCTION			
	12/8/43		Keel Laid	
	1/29/44		Completion	
Convoy	Depart	Arrival	Depart	Arrival
HK195	2/19/44	2/23/44	Galveston	Key West
KN297	2/23/44	2/28/44	Key West	New York City
HX282	3/6/44	3/22/44	New York City	Liverpool
ON231	4/7/44	4/24/44	Liverpool	New York City
HY291	5/10/44	5/27/44	New York City	Liverpool
Indep.	6/1/44	6/2/44	Liverpool	Londonderry
ON240	6/10/44	6/28/44	Liverpool	New York City
HY299	7/11/44	7/23/44	New York City	Liverpool (Oban)
WN612	7/25/44	7/27/44	Oban (Locke Ewe)	Methil (East coast, England)
FS1526	7/27/44	7/29/44	Methil	Southend (near Glasgow)
ETM59	8/10/44	8/11/44	Southend	Siene Bay
MISSING LEG				
EPM34	?	8/13/44	Portland	Siene Bay
MISSING LEG				
EPM34	8/13/44	?	Portland	Siene Bay
FBC75	9/6/44	9/9/44	Siene Bay	Barry
Indep.	9/11/44	9/12/44	Barry	Belfast
ON253	9/13/44	9/28/44	Liverpool	New York City
NG466	10/18/44	?	New York City	Guantanamo
MISSING LEG				
Indep.	10/27/44	11/4/44	Guaiva	Curacao
Indep.	11/5/44	11/13/44	Curacao	Cristobal
Indep.	11/14/44	11/22/44	Balboa	Tocopilla
Indep.	12/1/44	12/8/44	Tocopilla	Balboa
Indep.	12/9/44	12/5/44	Cristobal	Pensacola
Indep.	?	1/11/45	MISSING	Cristobal
Indep.	1/12/45	1/12/45	Balboa	Manus
SIX WEEKS?				
Escorted	4/1/45	4/6/45	Manus	Ulithi
Indep.	5/26/45	5/30/45?	Ulithi	Tacloban
SIX WEEKS?				
Indep.	7/14/45	8/10/45	Leyte	San Francisco
Indep.	8/12/45	8/24/45	San Francisco	Balboa
Indep.	8/24/45	9/4/45	Cristobal	New York City
Indep.	10/18/45	10/20/45	New York City	James River

southwest of the Indian subcontinent and is relatively rich with a per capita GDP roughly two and a half times that of the average for India.

In 1966 the Charles J. Finger was renamed one final time, she became the Samudra Vijay owned by Pent-Ocean Steamships out of Bombay, India. Her career ended in 1970 when she was scrapped at Bombay, most likely torn apart with her materials reused to fuel local industry.

If we were to assume that she travelled at the same rate during her years as a cargo steamer (though perhaps 'tramp steamer' would be a more accurate description) that she did during her World War II service (about 2,000 nautical miles per month), then her 23 years would have given her over half a million nautical miles of travel. This translates into close to 600,000 linear miles, more than enough for a round trip to the moon or 22 times around the earth. Her namesake, the renowned traveler and adventurer Charles J. Finger, probably would have been proud of her.

Leflar Family Archives

A sketch of Charles J. Finger circa 1940 drawn by Helen Finger Leflar.

Author's Note

The history of a Liberty ship which never saw combat might be one of the most mundane stories about World War II that could be told. What motivated this research? It was the historical quirk which resulted in the ship and this author both being named after the same man, Charles Jo-

seph Finger. One of his daughters, Helen Finger Leflar's, youngest son is the author, Charles Joseph Finger Leflar.

Family stories were passed down about the ship's existence. Prior to this research all I knew was that the ship was launched and named after my grandfather and that a family friend had spotted it in Leyte Gulf during the war. The availability of information on the internet made research possible without having to leave the comfortable confines of my office at the University of Arkansas. My older brother, Robert B Leflar, is also on the faculty and lives in the old Finger house of Gayeta Lodge and summons his family to meals with a ship's bell inscribed "U.S.S. Charles J. Finger."

End Notes

1. Spain, Mary Ann. "The Squire of Gayeta Remembered," *Flashback*, February 1981. See for further information about Charles J. Finger.
2. Interview with Helen Finger Leflar, December 30, 1988, privately published by the family: Helen Finger Leflar Interview, 1999. Ed. Charles J.F. Leflar.
3. An almost full listing of wartime convoys, dates, and ports of call is shown in Appendix A. The narrative of her voyages includes all significant travels but excludes movements that are essentially harbor movements, equivalent from moving from Manhattan to Brooklyn.
4. Methil, on the east coast of Scotland near Edinburgh, may well be the closest approach to hostile sea forces for the U.S.S. Charles J. Finger. While we have no way of knowing if she was near enemy submarines, the approach to Methil puts only open sea between her and organized enemy forces to the northeast in Norway, to the east in Denmark and to the southeast in the Netherlands. By the time the ship reached the Philippians, only disorganized Japanese forces remained near her ports of call.
5. See http://dannytraverso.com/. Accessed August 2012.
6. Information about the post war years is from the Danish Shipping Records company Tilbage til Ostasiatisk viewable online at http://www.faergejournalen.dk/handelsskibe/eac_lines/st_thomas_1945.htm. Accessed August 2012.
7. The source website is http://www.mariners-l.co.uk/eac/eac1940-1949.htm #stthomas47. Accessed August 2012.

Call for Submissions for Sixth Annual Lemke Prize

Deadline for submitting an article for the sixth annual competition for the Walter J. Lemke Prize is June 30, 2013. Anyone interested in Washington County history, whether a professional or amateur historian, is encouraged to enter. Topics can be on any phase of Washington County's history or archeology, deal with an individual or institution connected with the county, and can address any time period.

The winning article will receive $300; Second prize receives $200. Both winners receive framed certificates. Winners will be recognized at the society's annual meeting in October 2013.

Manuscripts will be judged on their contribution to the expansion of the county's history; the originality of the subject; and, the use of primary and secondary sources. The manuscripts must be original material, and not have been previously published; no more than 40 pages, typed, and double-spaced. Footnotes should be included, although they do not count toward the 40-page limit.

The title page should contain the heading "WALTER J. LEMKE ENTRY," the full title of the manuscript, the author's name, mailing address, telephone number, and email address.

Entries become the property of the Washington County Historical Society and will not be returned to the author. All submitted articles will be considered for publication in the *Flashback*. The historical society reserves the right to award one or no prizes.

Copies of all entries in the Lemke Prize will be deposited with the Special Collections Department at the University of Arkansas Libraries. Entries may be mailed to Lemke Prize, Washington County Historical Society, 118 E. Dickson Street, Fayetteville, AR 72701, or emailed to charlie.alison@gmail.com by June 30, 2012. If the entries are emailed, they should be either in the PDF or Microsoft Word format. Entries received after June 30 will be considered for the 2013 prize.

For additional information, contact Charlie Alison at the above mailing address, at 575-6731 or at charlie.alison@gmail.com.

Betty Davis: Building a Board from Splinters

By Charlie Alison

Betty (Hayes) Davis organized a family reunion for her many of nieces and nephews this past year and in researching her family tracked down many photographs, articles, documents and obituaries related to her ancestors. When she brought the extended family back together, some members of which had never met each other, she said that they arrived in Fayetteville as splinters, but by the end of the weekend, they had become a board. The following article includes excerpts from an interview conducted with her on June 6, 2012.

Betty Davis's great-grandparents on her mother's side were William "Squire" Taylor (about 1845-1921) and Tabitha Marshbanks (about 1850-1930). They had been slaves prior to the Civil War but were freed during war. Davis said that family lore indicated her great-grandparents moved from the Farmington area to Fayetteville during the Civil War and bought property along present-day Olive Avenue with money provided by their former master.

Betty: "Now Squire and Tabitha, I still don't know how they got to Farmington. Some came here with owners. See we're talking about a time before they became freemen. Some were brought here and released here. ... But they got to Fayetteville from Farmington.

"We know that Squire and Tabitha were in union before they were allowed to buy a marriage license. I have a copy of the marriage license. They were together before that. Back then, when a slave took a woman for his wife, they had to do it in the old system: 'jumping over the broom.' Whether they jumped over the broom, I have no idea. I don't know how they managed."

Photograph courtesy of Betty (Hayes) Davis

Betty Hayes in the 1930s. She described herself as an old person even at this young age. She was the youngest of nine children, and seven years younger than her next older sister. So growing up, she had no family her age nor friends who lived close by. She said: "I grew up with old people. See I was old when I was five or six years old. I was an old person in a young body. I just circulated with old people all day long."

Squire and Tabitha were officially married on Nov. 6, 1879, by then already involved in the Fayetteville community, helping organize the St. James A.M.E. Church.

Betty: "Now my great-grandfather is listed as the first Sunday School superintendent.You know before they built St. James, they had a church on Rock Street. Now Squire and Tabitha came here about 1861 or 62. And that was about the time that the community was trying to form a religious entity. So they had Sunday School first before the built St. James."

Betty was born five years before her great-grandmother died and recalled Tabitha in her last years.

Betty: "My great-grandmother, she was alive the first five years of my life, and because she was sort of bedridden. ... we [Betty's mother, Betty's aunt and Betty herself] were there constantly at her bedside, and when she got to the point where she would say no to them about taking medicine, they would give it to me, and I would go in and say, here, take this, and she would take it."

One of the mysteries of her research into her family tree is her grandmother, Susan, who was listed as a Marshbanks at the time of her marriage to Betty's grandfather, Joseph Manuel, on Jan. 7, 1886.

Betty: "We have been looking for the Marshbanks because the confusing thing is that Tabitha was apparently a Marshbanks. Susie, her daughter, who we always thought was a Taylor, when she married my grandfather, she was still listed as Marshbanks."

In the 1880 Census, Susan Marshbanks is listed as a stepdaughter of William Taylor. Regardless, Betty had little luck finding out more about Susan Marshbanks. She was also curious about the appearance of Susan, suggesting that Susan looked as though she had American Indian as part of her heritage.

The property that William and Tabitha Taylor purchased on Olive Avenue eventually became home to the Taylors' extended family. Betty said that her grandparents began offering their children part of the property and construction of a two-room house whenever one of them married. By the time she was born,

Courtesy of Betty Davis

Betty Hayes Davis's grandmother, Susan Marshbanks Manuel, probably during the 1890s.

there were four family houses in the 300 block of Olive Avenue.

Betty: "At 309 next door to where I was born, that was my Uncle Ralph's house. When he married, they gave him the lot and built two rooms. Well, he didn't stay there because he went to St. Louis and never came back.

Courtesy of Betty Davis

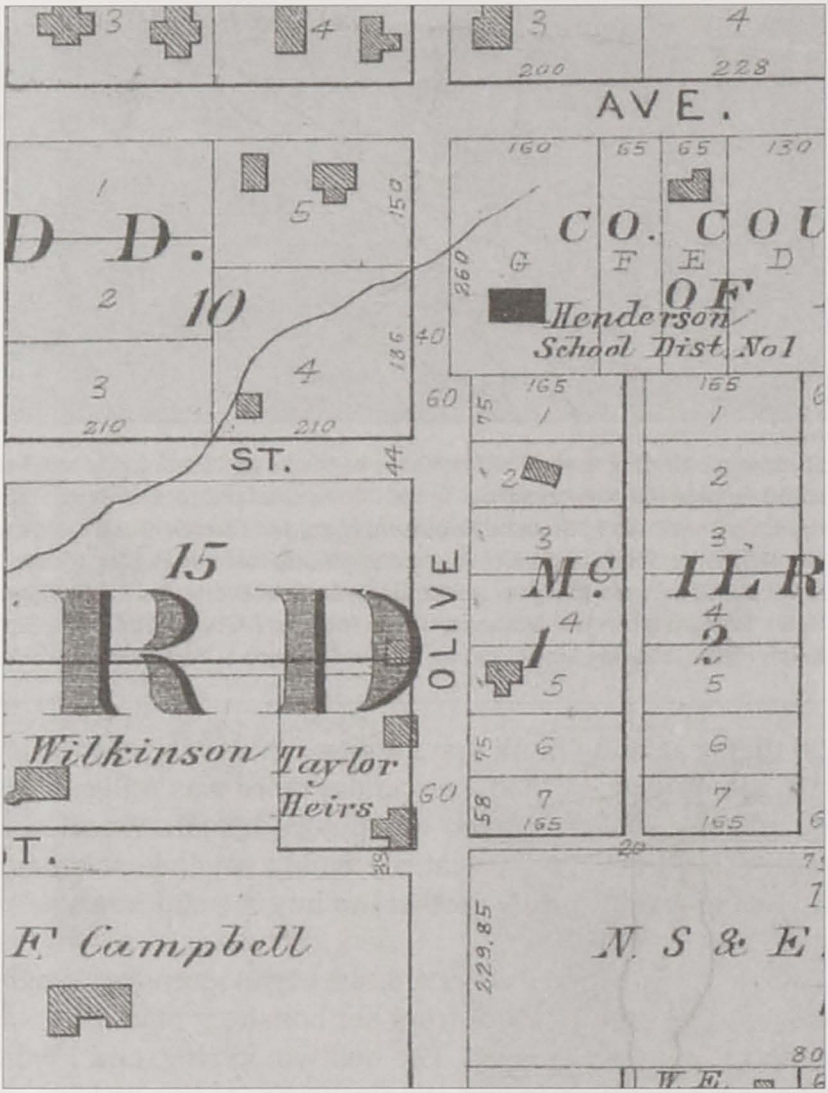
Five generations of the same family lived in the Taylor-Sutton-Hayes House, which stood at 310 North Olive Avenue. It was built by William and Tabitha Taylor.

"Then — when my mother and father married — they gave Daddy and my mother a lot, built the first two rooms, and then Daddy put five more rooms on.

"At some point, Daddy decided that he needed to make more money for the children's school clothes, so he went back to my grandfather, and said he wanted to buy a piece of property. He asked ... my grandfather if he would sell him an extra lot. He said I'll not sell it to you, but I'll give it you."

So her grandfather, Joseph Manuel, gave her father an extra lot across the street, and her father planted strawberries on it.

Betty: "Now that crop, his strawberry crop, was very lucrative. I have a little piece of paper where he had recorded the money he got for his strawberries back in the '20s. ... He made



Courtesy of Charlie Alison

A portion of the 1908 plat of Fayetteville shows property belonging to the Taylor heirs at the northwest corner of present-day Dickson Street and Olive Avenue in the Third Ward. The next intersecting streets north are Sutton Street and Lafayette Avenue. Henderson School is just to the north. The Taylor's first house had to be moved when Dickson Street was extended east up the mountain to Fletcher.

Students, including several of the Hayes brothers and sisters, and teachers stand outside Henderson School in 1926 for a class photo. Front row, left to right, are Van E. York, Blanche Robinson, Mary Jane Smith, Gussie Hayes, Florine Smith, Sarah W. Smith, Alberta Williams, Tula Lewis, Cleo Robinson, Arvel Carr, Sherman Morgan, Joel Jenkins, Samuel Evans, Ocie Mae Adams, Helen Williams, Loraine Williams, Velma Meyers, Mary Elizabeth Hayes, Ralph Hayes, Sterling Smith, Velma Fisher, Clarence E. York, Viola L. York,

$300 that year, and I think that's awesome.

"Piggly Wiggly, I didn't even know there was a Piggly Wiggly back then, and that's who was buying his strawberries. My mother would always say that my daddy never kept a penny. ... He would give it to [my mother] to buy the children's school clothes and supplies."

When Betty turned 6 years old, she began attending Henderson School, less than a block from her house.

Betty: "I guess I was six. The bell would ring, and I would start sprinting and get in line. We always had to line up to go into school. And I was only about a half block away. Living so close, I didn't think I needed to take a note for being late. I just liked the idea of hearing that bell and knowing, woops, I got to go! Be there in time to get in line and march into school.

"At Henderson, you went from one room to the other, depending on, you know, what grade you were in. One room would

Photo courtesy of Betty Davis

Mazor Blackburn Jr., Omar Adams, Leon Smith, Inez Young, Lois Meyers, Cora Meyers, Corine Wright, Bessie Fisher, Ruth York, Cecil Whitney and Lila Mae Fisher. Back row, left to right, are Allene Wright, Mrs. Mertis Gaikens, Ethel McPherson, Zoline Hayes, Rosa Evans, Ivy C. York, Christine Hayes, Melba Young, Gustine Payne, Irene Peel, Mrs. Lucille Ingram, J.V. Taylor, Morris Carr, Monta Sue Payne, Lem McPherson and Ellsworth Taylor.

simply change classes by the front row going to the back. Sometimes, depending on what grade you were in, you might have gone from one room to the other. It was just shifting between those two rooms for eight grades.

"We were lucky to have two rooms and outhouses," she said laughing.

The brick building that housed Henderson School still stands, although today it has been enlarged and is used as a private residence. Betty

Courtesy of Betty Davis

Betty Hayes

Clara Hayes, mother

Catherine Hayes, sister

Zoline Hayes Boatman, sister

Christine Hayes Coleman, sister

Gussie Hayes, sister

Ralph "Buddy" Hayes, brother

Mary Hayes, sister

Betty Hayes Davis

said the two rooms that comprised the school are just as they were when she was a student. Henderson quit serving as her school when a new school, Lincoln, opened on Willow Avenue in 1939.

Betty: "Henderson closed in 1939 as a school. They had built a new school on that corner where the projects are. [On the east side of Willow Avenue between Rock and Center.] So we marched to that building. We marched and we sang. The principal's wife, who taught also in that school — she was a music major — and she wrote this song for us to sing:

"Old Henderson School is too old for its age,
Since the new Lincoln was built.
Old Henderson School is just too old for its age,
Since new Lincoln was built.
Seventy years without stumbling, tick, tock, tick, tock.
It's lights never trembling, don't stop, don't stop.
But it's closed now, never to open again,
Since the new Lincoln was built."

During her first eight years of school, she had Herman A. and Hazel G. Caldwell as teachers. They moved to Texarkana, and her teachers changed for ninth grade at Lincoln. She recalled the principal's last name as being Radcliff, and her teacher that year was Juanita Parker, the oldest daughter of Otis and Anna Parker.

Betty described the black community of Fayetteville when she was growing up as consisting of four communities. The black families who lived near her on Olive were known as living on "The Hill." In addition to her own relatives, Russell and Pearl Bly lived nearby as well as at least one other family.

Betty: "The Hill. That's where I lived. There was a time, I was told by my parents, there were two other black families that owned property up on Olive. One was the Bly family, and they owned the property next to the school, and at one time — this is true — there was some people in Fayetteville who wanted to live up here but they didn't want to have black neighbors. They of-

fered exhorbitant money to buy us out. None of my family would sell. The Blys sold out and moved down in the Hollow. My family just decided they liked where they lived. Only our family lived up here."

The other three communities included families who lived in the Hollow, the Valley and Red Hill. The Hollow was and is an area along Willow and Washington avenues, roughly bounded on the north by Spring Street and on the south by Huntsville Road. To the south where Washington and College avenues run into 15th street, the black community was known as the Valley, And last, a small group of black families lived on the hill to the east of the intersection of College Avenue and North Street, an area known as the Red Hill community.

Betty: "The Valley, when I was growing up, consisted of the area beyond [Huntsville Road] down through that area toward 15th street. That was called the Valley. That's where there was a confluence of black people who lived down there. Otis Parker and the Hoovers and the Rogers.

"If you were to continue on Willow Street. Anyone who lived on Willow Street this direction, up this way, actually lived in what they called the Hollow, and they still call it the Hollow.

"There was a community known as Red Hill. That was where there was black families. There was a small community of blacks out there, four or five. Blackmon and the Dowells and their folk, it was their community."

Betty described a duality in the community regarding the relationship between races. During the 1920s and 1930s while she was growing up, Fayetteville abided by the laws of Arkansas that tried to maintain separation of races. She recalled not being able to go to the movie theaters in town, except that occasionally, special dispensation was allowed for a movie such as "An Imitation of Life." Yet Fayetteville was one of the few towns in the region with a school for blacks, albeit only available through the eighth or ninth grade. It was also one where some job opportunities existed, although again the types of jobs available to blacks were very limited. Of her own family, her uncle Chris

Courtesy of Betty Davis

Betty's great-aunt, Lucy Taylor Sutton, left, and her son, J.V. Taylor, who grew up in the Hayes household.

Manuel graduated from Philander Smith College but could only find work as a bootblack. Meanwhile, her aunt worked as a caterer, perhaps the height of jobs to which African American residents of Fayetteville could aspire during the 1920s and 30s.

Betty also explained that, today, a lot of people are still uncomfortable when hearing racist language and try to soften it by using euphemisms.

Betty: "I hear people now, they won't say the word 'nigger.' They politely say 'the N word.' And it cracks me up. You know why? If you know what it is, how much can you sweeten it.

"But let me tell you it was a word that never resonated with me. Never. Because early on I remember — I can't remember how young I was — my mother sent me to Graham's grocery store on the corner of Olive and Maple. And on the way there, these chldren were hiding behind the house and that's what they were taunting me. But I was always told to ignore it so I

kept walking. But my mother said let me know whatever happens in your life. She wanted to know everything.

"So when I got home and said, 'Momma,' she said 'What baby?' 'There was some children hiding ... and they were calling me a nigger.' She just came and said, 'Well, are you one?' And I said, 'Oh no.' 'Then why would you let it bother you?'

"My mother diffused any hurt that word could have.

"I said I had two very strong women in my life. One was my mother, and the other one was Susan [Chadick]'s mother [Ruth Ellis Lesh]. My mother was my positive force at home, and Susan's mother was always a positive force in my community. So the things that other people grew up having impact their lives didn't impact mine.

"We were taught to be a part of the community. ... I've walked into many lions' dens, but like Daniel I walked out again.

"If you go through life being afraid of what might be, you'll always be afraid."

Like many students from the African American community, when Betty finished the nine grades of school offered to blacks in Fayetteville, the only way she could continue her education was by leaving Fayetteville. Fayetteville High School was segregated and only permitted white students until 1954. Many black students who wanted to continue their education attended high school at Fort Smith, but Betty's mother, Clara, found out that the school was not accredited, and she wanted Betty to be able to go to college after high school. So her parents sent her to attend Sumner High School in St. Louis, where she could live with her uncle, as had two older siblings.

Betty: "I always knew that, by hook or by crook, I wanted to go to college. ... When I finished Sumner in St. Louis, I had a scholarship to go to college. I would have been one of the first black students to go to St. Louis University. In 1946, my mother died in August, a month before I was to go to school. That was the end of my scholarship. I was left with bills to pay and the house."

She returned to Fayetteville to take care of her family's estate and went to work locally.

Courtesy of Betty Davis

Betty Hayes, wearing her WAVES uniform.

Betty: "There was an Army colonel — Col. Dingler and his wife — came back to Fayetteville. She came to the house to see my mother, not knowing that she had died. ... When she found out my mother was dead and found out that I was the last of her children, she wanted to know what I was going to do with my money. I announced to her that I'm working now to make enough money to go back to college. She looked at me and said, my dear, you will never make enough to go to college.

"To make a long story short, she invited me to come over to Mount Nord where she and the colonel were staying."

It took three visits with the Dinglers before they had talked her into joining the Navy WAVES, the Women Accepted for Volunteer Emergency Service. She would spend two years serving in the WAVES, and the government would then pay her tuition.

Betty: "I really knew that made a lot of sense, so that's what I did. That gave me the GI benefits to go to school."

She chose New York University after her tour of duty was finished.

"I was a medical technologist, and I worked at NYU. I worked at NYU before I was a student. ... I always tried to put building blocks together. When I got out of the Navy, I took a portion of my money and I went to a medical tech school because I had the basics in the Navy. I got my certificate. That gave me a chance to walk into someone's medical facility and go to work.

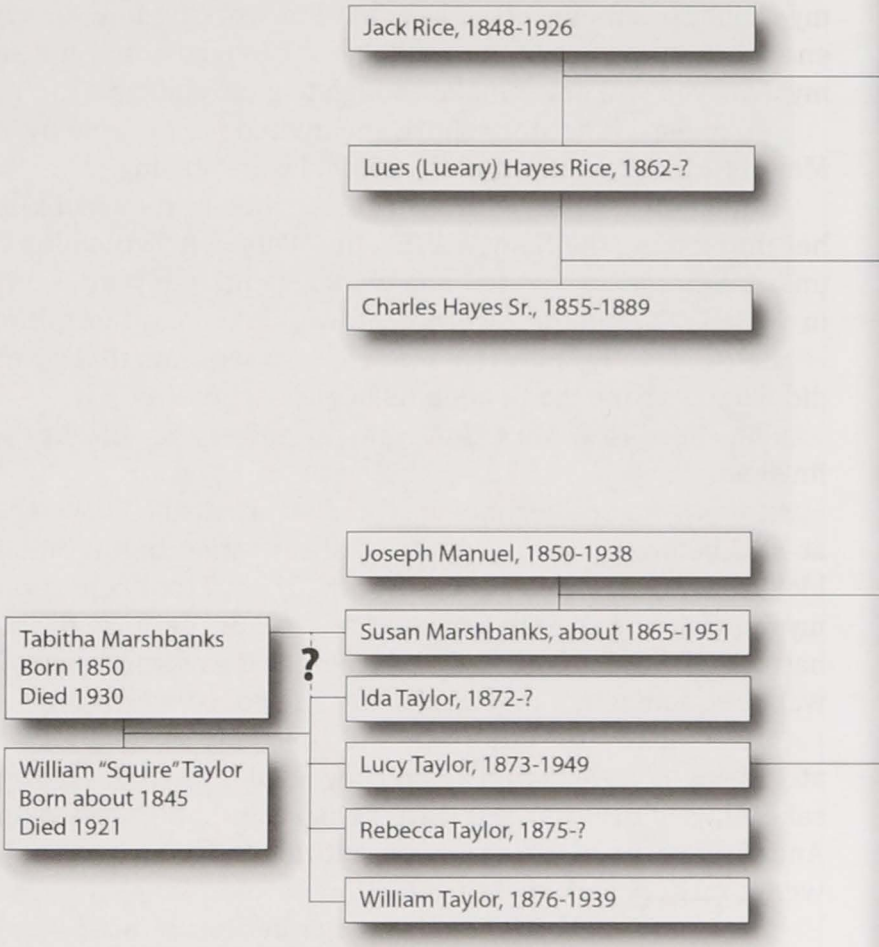
"Had I done it the other way and gone into a college immediately, I would have to find a job. They wouldn't give me a decent salary. I went to work at NYU after I had used some of my money. And the day I went to work, I was entitled to 12 free credits. So I went to school and worked at NYU."

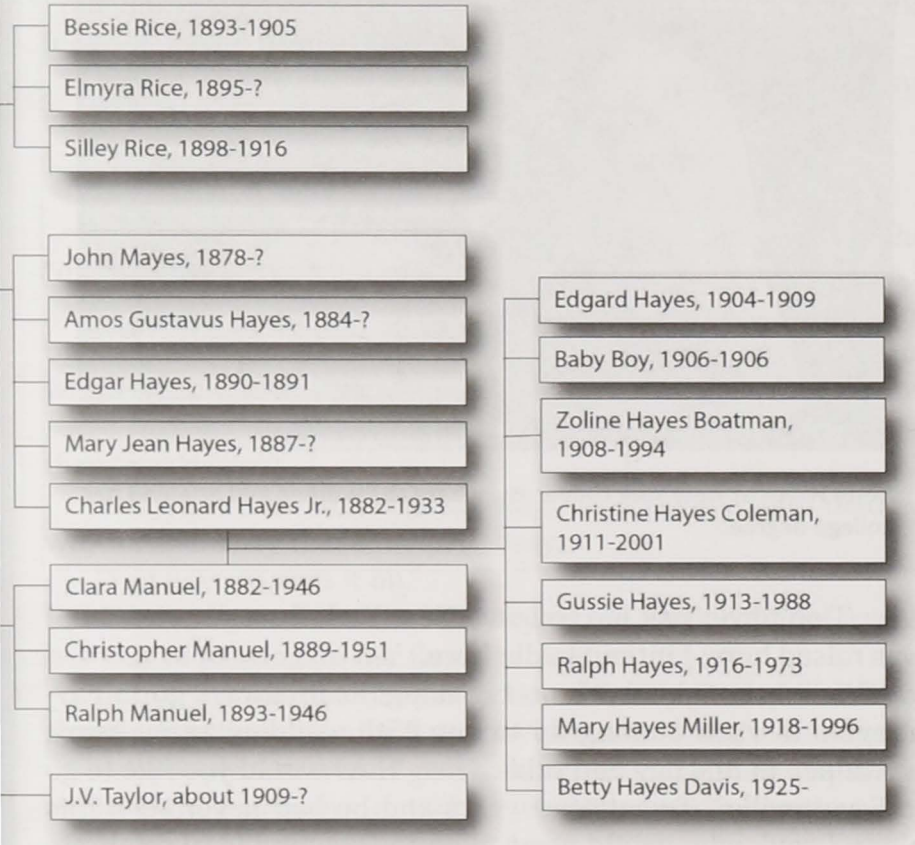
While in New York, Betty also met her future husband, Bill Davis. They married and she expected to stay there for awhile because Bill had no desire to live anywhere else.

Betty: "I was gone almost 40 years but I came back. I always knew I would. My reason for leaving was I knew I wanted to go to college and find a career.

"Actually, my husband brought me back. He said his thing

The Taylor-Manuel-Hayes Family Tree




Bessie Rice, 1893-1905
Elmyra Rice, 1895-?
Silley Rice, 1898-1916
John Mayes, 1878-?
Amos Gustavus Hayes, 1884-?
Edgar Hayes, 1890-1891
Mary Jean Hayes, 1887-?
Charles Leonard Hayes Jr., 1882-1933
Clara Manuel, 1882-1946
Christopher Manuel, 1889-1951
Ralph Manuel, 1893-1946
J.V. Taylor, about 1909-?
Edgard Hayes, 1904-1909
Baby Boy, 1906-1906
Zoline Hayes Boatman, 1908-1994
Christine Hayes Coleman, 1911-2001
Gussie Hayes, 1913-1988
Ralph Hayes, 1916-1973
Mary Hayes Miller, 1918-1996
Betty Hayes Davis, 1925-

Courtesy of Betty Davis

Betty Hayes at New York University, where she worked and attained her college degree.

was: 'Don't ever ask me to leave New York. I was born here; I was raised here; I intend to die here.'

"Well, I thought that's no big thing, I can always go to Fayetteville to visit. Coming up to our 25th wedding anniversary, he walked in one day and said to me: 'How would you like to go to Fayetteville?' Twenty-five years and he had never seen this place. I said, who would want to go to Fayetteville to celebrate an anniversary alone. He said, 'Who says you're going alone?' He brought me back.

"He just didn't tell me that he had a medical problem. He worked for a medical group and there were 13 doctors there. And one day, he and the director of nurses had lunch together, and he told her he was going to bring me home to get me settled before he had to leave me. But he never told me that, and I never heard it until she wrote me a letter after I buried him and told me that he had told her that.

"I thought that was really pretty unselfish of him."

When they moved back, they initially lived on Township Road.

Betty: "He got me back. I got settled. I remember one day, Polly Baker ... came to the house and said, who is that man talking to Bill. He's from a company that puts in security systems.

"She said, 'Bill you don't need a security system. This is Fayetteville.'

"He looked up and said, 'But I want it darling.'

"When he left me, he left me secure."

Betty later lived in Arkanshire for 6 years but decided she "didn't need the constant nurturing." She moved from there to a house on Olive Avenue that she rents from , barely a block from the neighborhood in which she grew up. The four houses in which her extended family lived no longer stand, but two stone steps that led down to one of the houses are still visible along the streetside.

Betty: "You know, I still say that I had people who made a way for me. They made my path easy.

"You have to pass it on."

The family reunion that she organized earlier this year was her way of passing on her family's history.

Betty: "I said I had a dysfunctional family. Being the last of that dysfunctional family, it was my desire to bring them together. I tell people that when I got them together at Mount Sequoyah, we had some splinters, but when we left we had a board.

"I think that they were ready for it. ... They were just enrapt. And every time I told a story, there was a hush.

"So this is what I was all about, bringing these poor souls together. Giving them a sense of pride. You came from some solid people. Tabitha and William were solid people.

"To me, it's been a great life. That's why I feel I need to pass it on."

Battle of Cane Hill

The following are the reports of the 1862 Battle of Cane Hill as printed 150 years ago in The New York Times. *They are reprinted here in the order that the reports were sent, although* The New York Times *printed the Additional Details two days before the Official Report. The Additional Details story was published on Dec. 2; the Official Report on Dec. 4; and Another Report on Dec. 6.*

THE WAR IN ARKANSAS.; THE BATTLE OF CANE HILL. OFFICIAL REPORT OF GEN. BLUNT.

HEADQUARTERS, BATTLE-FIELD, Nov. 20.

Major-General Curtis:

GENERAL: Learning that a rebel force under Gen. MARMADUKE, 8,000 strong, was at Cane Hill, 40 miles north of Van Buren, Ark., and that Gen. HINDMAN was to join him to-day or to-morrow with a large force of infantry, for the purpose of making a desperate effort to enter Missouri, I determined to strike MARMADUKE and destroy him before reinforcements arrived.

Leaving my transportation in the rear, I made a forced march of thirty-five miles, with about five hundred men, and attacked him at about 10 o'clock this morning. Found him strongly posted on advantageous ground. After an engagement of about three hours he commenced a retreat. Every foot of the ground was fought over and hotly contested until near sundown, when the enemy finding that their artillery, which they were making every effort to get away, was about to be captured, sent Cols. SHELBY and EMMETT MCDONALD with a flag of truce for the ostensible purpose of caring for their dead and wounded, but with the real object of making good their retreat to Van Buren.

The casualties of the day I am unable to state with accuracy at this time, as we fought over twelve miles of ground. One of the rebel officers with the flag of truce stated to me that they had lost sixty in killed, among them a Lieutenant-Colonel. My loss is comparatively small. Among the wounded are Lieut.-Col. JEWELL and Lieut. JOHN-

SON, of the Kansas Sixth -- both of them, I fear, mortally. The enemy are badly whipped, and will probably not venture north of the Boston Mountains again this Winter, if this part of the State is held. As it is their reliance for subsistence, and having eaten out all in the valley of the Arkansas, they must soon retreat into Texas.

I have sent for my transportation to come up, and shall occupy a position at or near Cane Hill. The rebels had about ten days' rations of Dread, cooked and in little bags behind their saddles, from which it is evident that they intended making a desperate effort to force their way North.

Very respectfully, your obedient servant,
JAMES C. BLUNT,
Brigadier-General Commanding.

— — —

ADDITIONAL DETAILS OF THE BATTLE AT CANE HILL.

SPRINGFIELD, Mo., Saturday, Nov. 29.

Gen. BLUNT, with 5,000 National soldiers, attacked and routed 8,000 rebels, under Gen. MARMADUKE, at Cane Hill, Ark., on the 20th instant.

Sixty rebels were killed in the engagement, and the balance driven some twenty miles.

Gen. BLUNT telegraphs that the rebels are badly whipped, and will not probably venture north of the Boston Mountains again this Winter; and as they have consumed all the subsistence in the Valley of the Arkansas, they must soon retreat into Texas.

— — —

THE BATTLE OF KANE HILL, ARK.; ANOTHER REPORT FROM GEN. BLUNT. Two Pieces of Artillery Captured-- Quantril's Band in the Fight.

HEADQUARTERS FIRST DIVISION ARMY
OF THE FRONTIER, CANE HILL, Sunday, Nov. 30, 1862.

Gen. MARMADUKE continued his fight all night after the battle of the 28th inst., and is now in Van Buren, Arkansas. Gen. HINDMAN

was expected to reinforce him at this place on the evening of that day. Prisoners, of whom I captured twenty-five, state that MARMADUKE's force was 11,000. They were compelled to abandon two pieces of artillery disabled by my batteries. A number of their officers are killed, among them a Lieut.-Col. MONROE, of a Texas regiment, and a Capt. MARTIN, of an Arkansas regiment.

The notorious QUANTRIL and his band were engaged in the fight, with Col. SHELBY and EMMETT MCDONALD commanding the rear guard in the retreat across the Boston Mountains. They fought desperately. Some of QUANTRIL's men were killed and others taken prisoners. My loss in killed is five, and four more were mortally wounded -- one of whom, Lieut.-Col. JEWELL, Sixth Kansas, has since died. Lieut. CAMPBELL, Kansas Sixth, was taken prisoner.

The loss of the enemy in killed was about seventy-five. They carried most of their wounded off the field, and sent them to houses on the right and left of the road and battle-ground.

All regret the death of Lieut.-Col. JEWELL, as he was a brave and gallant officer.

Two contrabands arrived to-day from Van Buren, who state that HINDMAN, with 12,000 infantry, crossed, the Arkansas River from the South on Tuesday last, for the purpose of moving up to reinforce MARMADUKE, but that they have now all returned to their hole.

My transportation has just come up. I occupy the same position occupied by MARMADUKE when I attacked him, and intend holding it.

Respectfully,
JAMES G. BLUNT, Brig.-General.

Annual Meeting

The Washington County Historical Society will hold its annual membership meeting on October 7. All members of the society are welcome and encouraged to attend. Officers and the society's board of directors will be elected to the 2012-13 term.

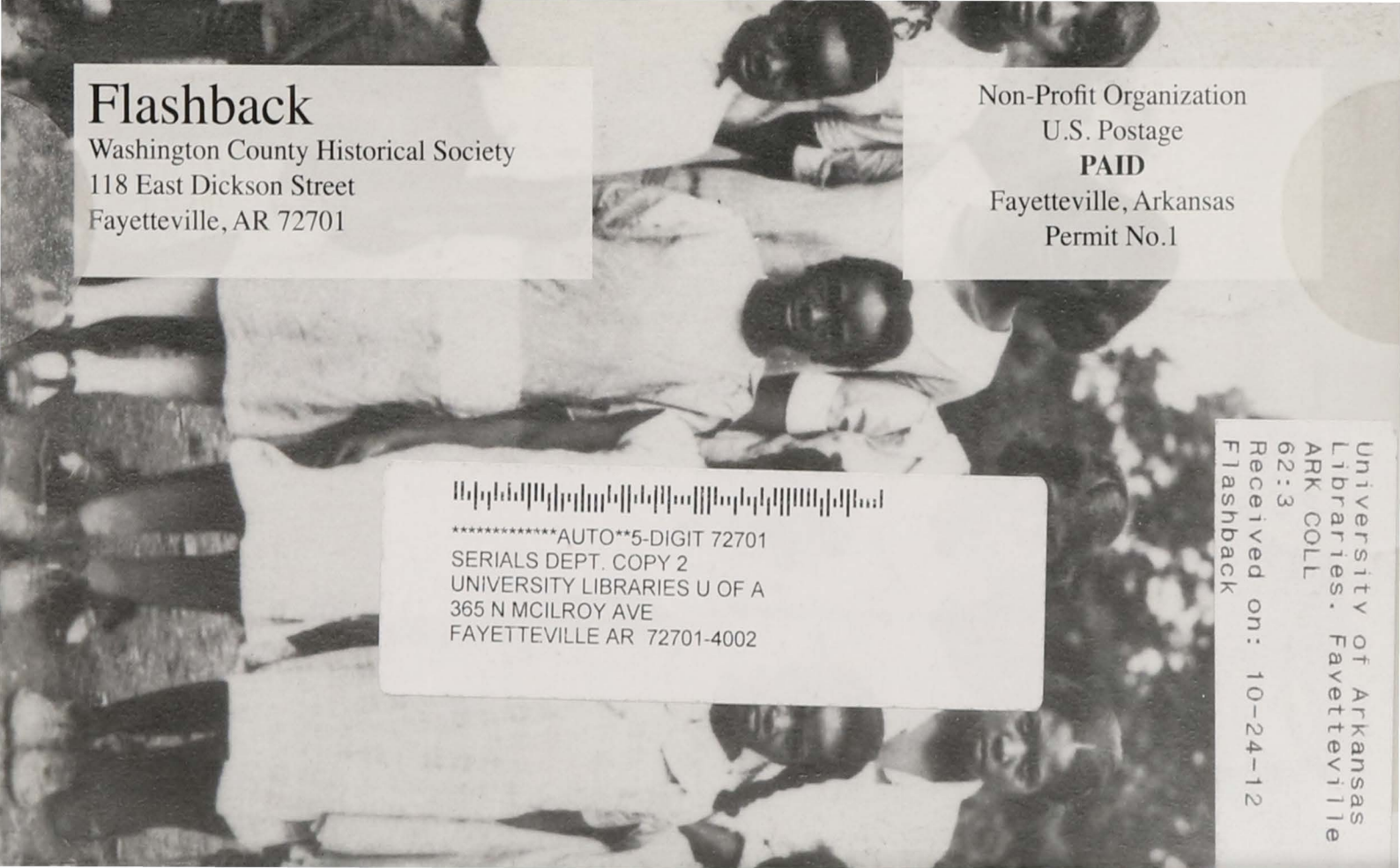
Susan Chadick and Tony Wappel
will be honored with the
2012 Distinguished Citizens Award

The Walter J. Lemke Prize will also be presented.

The meeting will be at 12:30 p.m. Sunday, Oct. 7

at Mermaid's Restaurant
2217 N. College Ave., Fayetteville

Tickets must be purchased in advance for lunch.
Tickets are $25 per person.
Call Tess at 479-521-2970
or stop by Headquarters House
118 E. Dickson St., Fayetteville
Office hours are Tuesday-Thursday, 1-4 p.m.



Flashback

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